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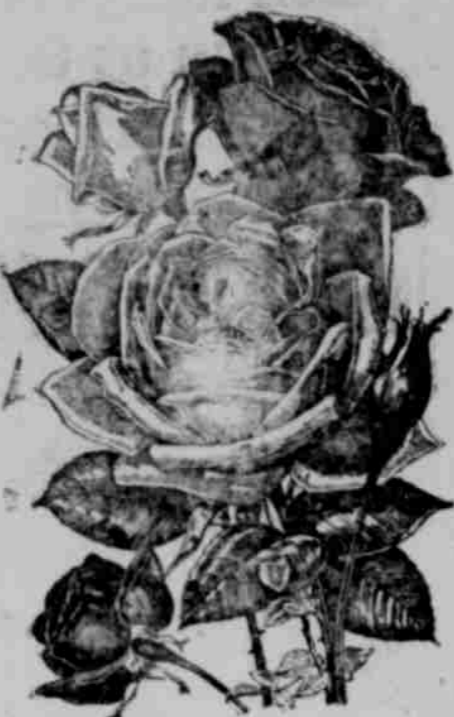
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VARNISH AND COLOGNE RUSSIA'S DEADLY FOES

PHYSICIANS HOLD MANY CONFERENCES FOR PREVENTING DEATHS FROM POISONOUS SUBSTITUTES FOR A NATURAL STIMULANT

BLINDNESS BECOMES GRAVE DANGER

Russian Newspapers Tell Terrible Stories of Fatalities and Suffering That Now Follow in the Wake of Prohibition

More and more news is constantly coming from the most authoritative newspapers in Europe, confirming the already well established facts concerning the desperate condition caused in Russia by the substitution of the illicit manufacture of strong drink and the many substitutes resorted to by the people.

The New York Sun adds the following testimony to the daily increasing list of witnesses to the lamentable state of affairs caused by the new regime.

After the government liquor stores were closed on Oct. 13, when the prohibition decree became effective, many illicit saloons and distilleries sprang up and sold secretly all kinds of substitutes for vodka. These beverages for the most part were composed of wood alcohol and denatured alcohol extracted from varnish and lacquer, spices, snuff, dry yeast, cider and wild hops. The consumption of these substitutes has been increasing and they are proving a source of serious danger. Of course it is the wood alcohol that does the chief harm.

Substitute For Vodka.

Of the various noxious concoctions that are being drunk in Russia one is "kvasok." It is made of cider, wild hops, dry yeast, wood alcohol and snuff. This snuff is sold in large quantities. Another of the substitutes is "khanza," of which the chief ingredients are red pepper and other strong spices along with wood alcohol.

These substitutes are for the poorer classes. People better off have resorted to such things as cologne and tincture of valerian. In some places conditions have become so deplorable that pharmacists have applied to the authorities to regulate the sale of substitutes for vodka, although the increased demand has meant extra profits. In other districts the medical authorities prompted the government officers to post notices in all public places warning the population about the dire results of drinking the substitutes for vodka.

Here are some items taken from Russian newspapers which illustrate the danger arising from the present situation.

Ravages of Noxious Drinks.

"In Pskov a party of eight were poisoned through the consumption of varnish and eau de cologne, which they drank in the absence of vodka. Seven of the party died."

"In Petrograd, unable to buy vodka, W. Shaskov, 46 years old, drank eau de cologne and died on the way to hospital. A. Zelentzon, a tailor, drank denatured alcohol and was taken to the hospital in an unconscious condition."

"At Kursk a party of petty officers of the engineering corps in Belgorod discovered a place where they could get wood alcohol. They went off on an orgy with the result that P. Pelukrov, S. Lozkin, A. Zavaritzky, N. Markov and F. Lyandin are dead. The other five officers are seriously ill."

"At Kioff, in the Lukianov police district, the police found an unknown man on the street in an unconscious condition. Notwithstanding the immediate aid given him the doctor could not revive him and he was taken in an automobile to the hospital. There he was revived, but shortly after

er began to bleed, and he died from convulsions. An analysis showed he was poisoned from drinking varnish."

"At Nijny Lomboy ten soldiers died from drinking wood alcohol. The district court sentenced the pharmacist, Yanyeyev, to six months at hard labor for selling wood alcohol to the soldiers."

Many Persons Are Poisoned.

In Rostov alone, according to the Ryetch of Petrograd, there have been registered during the last five months twenty-eight cases of deaths from the consumption of denatured alcohol.

Dr. F. F. Tchametzky, one of the best known physicians of Moscow, gave a detailed account of the effects of denatured alcohol and varnish on the human system in the paper entitled "Poisonings from Denatured Alcohol and Varnish in Moscow," which he read at the congress of neuropathologists and psychiatrists held in Moscow last February. He said:

"Since the prohibition of the sale of liquor at the end of August there has appeared a new type of cases at the Central Moscow hospital and other hospitals—poisonings from denatured alcohol and varnish. Among the patients were women. Many of those who were brought to the hospitals with bad cases of poisonings died after several days, while others were cured, though their cure was very slow."

Many Cases of Blindness.

In Petrograd the Ophthalmological society appointed a special commission to devise ways and means for combating the increased consumption of denatured alcohol, eau de cologne and other liquids, the use of which causes blindness. The commission was composed of Drs. M. E. Reich, I. S. Peizer and V. N. Yeleonskaya.

In its report at a meeting of the Ophthalmological society held at Petrograd on May 7 the commission said "that in the Petropavlovsk and Obukhovsk hospitals there were treated up to April, 1915, 2,882 persons with cases of partial blindness due to the use of denatured alcohol, wood alcohol, varnish, etc. Of this number twenty-seven died. In the eye wards of two prominent Petrograd hospitals there were treated during the same period 138 persons with the complete loss of sight or in various stages of blindness."

Efforts to Protect the People

All the medical societies have during the past few months been hard at work trying to get people to abstain from drinking these deadly beverages. They are making use of public lectures and special literature, which has been distributed in large quantities. There is hardly a medical congress or a session of a medical society in Russia at which the question of alcohol poisoning is not on the order of business.

As a result of the activity of the medical societies the sale of wood alcohol has already been prohibited in some places. In other places the sale has been regulated. In Kiev, for instance, the governor issued an order providing for the sale of varnish and lacquer only in specified places, which will be under strict police supervision. The storekeepers also are compelled by the order to make an entry of each sale.

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